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**KENNEDY ON PRESIDENT OBAMA'S FISCAL YEAR 2010 BUDGET**

WASHINGTON – Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, today released the following statement on President Obama's Fiscal Year 2010 Budget:

"I commend President Obama for presenting Congress with an honest budget that makes the tough but necessary choices to get our country back on track. This budget ends an era of irresponsibility and accounting gimmicks, cuts taxes for middle class Americans and makes sound investments essential for a strong economic future for our nation.

"With this budget, the President also makes an historic commitment to the goal of quality, affordable health care for all Americans. I'm optimistic that Congress is now ready to answer the challenge of enacting legislation to reach that goal, and the funds proposed in the budget are an essential starting point for our effort.

"For the millions of American families increasingly worried about whether they can afford the health care they need, the President's budget is a strong statement that help is on the way. It takes important steps to improve public health, reduce health disparities, strengthen the health workforce, improve food safety, and build on the important investments in the economic recovery bill on prevention, health information technology, and health care quality.

"The education provisions in this budget will bring a world of new opportunity for millions of students. The doors to college will be far more open. The larger Pell grants, the more reasonable student loans, and the tax credit for low- and middle-income families will go a long way toward preventing the dream of college from becoming a nightmare of rising costs for students across the nation.

"This budget promises a helping hand for working families struggling during our economic crisis. It will fund the programs that hardworking Americans need most – help for the unemployed, retraining for the dislocated, protections against job discrimination, and stronger enforcement of health and safety standards in the workplace. For millions of families throughout the nation, President Obama's budget is clearly designed to restore the American Dream."

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